

II. Listing of Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1-23. (Canceled)

24. (Currently Amended) A coupling system for connecting a power source to a medical dissection tool, the coupling system comprising:

a coupling shaft having a proximal portion, an opposing distal portion, and a longitudinal axis extending therebetween, wherein a section of the distal portion comprises an external surface and an internal surface, the internal surface defining an internal passage for receiving a portion of the medical dissection tool,

the coupling shaft further comprising a first aperture extending from the external surface to the internal surface in a direction substantially perpendicular to the longitudinal axis, the first aperture having a first length extending substantially along the longitudinal axis and a first width extending substantially transverse to the longitudinal axis, the first length being greater than the first width such that the first aperture is elongated along the longitudinal axis; and

a first locking member positioned at least partially within the first aperture and movable along the longitudinal axis with respect to the coupling shaft from an unlocked position to a locked position to secure the medical dissection tool within the internal passage.

25. (Currently Amended) The coupling system of claim 24 wherein the first aperture defines a proximal wall portion extending substantially perpendicular to the longitudinal axis and a distal wall portion extending substantially perpendicular to the longitudinal axis, the proximal and distal wall portions separated by substantially the length of the aperture along the longitudinal axis, the first locking member being spaced from the proximal wall portion in the unlocked position and spaced from the distal wall portion in the locked position.

26. (Previously Presented) The coupling system of claim 25 wherein the first locking member is positioned adjacent to the distal wall portion in the unlocked position and adjacent to the proximal wall portion in the locked position.

27. (Previously Presented) The coupling system of claim 24 wherein the first locking member comprises a spherical ball.

28. (Currently Amended) The coupling system of claim 24, wherein the coupling shaft further comprises:

a second aperture extending from the external surface to the internal surface in a direction substantially perpendicular to the longitudinal axis, the second aperture having a second length extending substantially along the longitudinal axis and a second width extending substantially transverse to the longitudinal axis, the second length being greater than the second width such that the second aperture is elongated along the longitudinal axis;

a third aperture extending from the external surface to the internal surface in a direction substantially perpendicular to the longitudinal axis, the third aperture having a third length extending substantially along the longitudinal axis and a third width extending substantially transverse to the longitudinal axis, the third length being greater than the third width such that the third aperture is elongated along the longitudinal axis;

wherein the first, second, and third apertures are equally spaced about a circumference of the coupling shaft.

29. (Previously Presented) The coupling system of claim 28 further comprising:

a second locking member positioned at least partially within the second aperture and movable along the longitudinal axis with respect to the coupling shaft from an unlocked positioned to a locked position to secure the medical dissection tool within the internal passage; and

a third locking member positioned at least partially within the third aperture and movable along the longitudinal axis with respect to the coupling shaft from an unlocked positioned to a locked position to secure the medical dissection tool within the internal passage;
wherein the first, second, and third locking members comprise spherical balls.

30. (Previously Presented) The coupling system of claim 24 further comprising an engagement sleeve movably engaged with the coupling shaft, the engagement sleeve having a tapered internal contact surface for moving the first locking member along the longitudinal axis with respect to the coupling shaft from the unlocked positioned to the locked position.

31. (Currently Amended) The coupling system of claim 24 wherein the first locking member is moveable at approximately a 45° angle relative to the longitudinal axis and the first aperture from the unlocked position to the locked position.

32. (New) A coupling system for a medical dissection tool, the coupling system configured to connect a power source to the medical dissection tool, the coupling system comprising:

a coupling shaft having a proximal portion, an opposing distal portion, and a longitudinal axis extending therebetween, wherein the distal portion comprises an external surface and an internal surface, the internal surface defining a bore for receiving a portion of the medical dissection tool,

a first aperture extending from the external surface to the internal surface along a first axis substantially perpendicular to the longitudinal axis, the first aperture having a first length extending substantially along the longitudinal axis between a proximal wall and a distal wall, the first aperture having a first width extending substantially transverse to both the longitudinal axis and the first axis between a pair of sidewalls, wherein the first length is greater than the first width such that the first aperture is elongated along the longitudinal axis and wherein the proximal wall, distal wall, and pair of sidewalls extend in a direction substantially parallel to the first axis; and

a first locking member positioned at least partially within the first aperture and translatable along the longitudinal axis with respect to the coupling shaft from an unlocked position to a locked position to secure the medical dissection tool within the internal passage, wherein the first locking member is spaced from the proximal wall of the first aperture and adjacent to the distal wall of the first aperture in the unlocked position and wherein the first locking member is adjacent to the proximal wall of the first aperture and spaced from the distal wall of the first aperture in the locked position.

33. (New) The coupling system of claim 32 wherein the first locking member translates at an angle of approximately 45° relative to the longitudinal axis and the first axis when moved between the unlocked and locked positions.

34. (New) The coupling system of claim 32 wherein the first locking member comprises a spherical ball.

35. (New) The coupling system of claim 32, further comprising:

a second aperture extending from the external surface to the internal surface along a second axis substantially perpendicular to the longitudinal axis, the second aperture having a second length extending substantially along the longitudinal axis between a proximal wall and a distal wall, the second aperture having a first width extending substantially transverse to both the longitudinal axis and the second axis between a pair of sidewalls, wherein the second length is greater than the second width such that the second aperture is elongated along the longitudinal axis and wherein the proximal wall, distal wall, and pair of sidewalls extend in a direction substantially parallel to the second axis; and

a second locking member positioned at least partially within the second aperture and translatable along the longitudinal axis with respect to the coupling shaft from an unlocked position to a locked position to secure the medical dissection tool within the internal passage, wherein the second locking member is spaced from the proximal wall of the second aperture and adjacent to the distal wall of the second aperture in the unlocked position and wherein the second

locking member is adjacent to the proximal wall of the second aperture and spaced from the distal wall of the second aperture in the locked position;

a third aperture extending from the external surface to the internal surface along a third axis substantially perpendicular to the longitudinal axis, the third aperture having a third length extending substantially along the longitudinal axis between a proximal wall and a distal wall, the third aperture having a first width extending substantially transverse to both the longitudinal axis and the third axis between a pair of sidewalls, wherein the third length is greater than the third width such that the third aperture is elongated along the longitudinal axis and wherein the proximal wall, distal wall, and pair of sidewalls extend in a direction substantially parallel to the third axis; and

a third locking member positioned at least partially within the third aperture and translatable along the longitudinal axis with respect to the coupling shaft from an unlocked positioned to a locked position to secure the medical dissection tool within the internal passage, wherein the third locking member is spaced from the proximal wall of the third aperture and adjacent to the distal wall of the third aperture in the unlocked position and wherein the third locking member is adjacent to the proximal wall of the third aperture and spaced from the distal wall of the third aperture in the locked position;

36. (New) The coupling system of claim 35, wherein the first, second, and third locking members each comprise a spherical ball.

37. (New) The coupling system of claim 32, further comprising an engagement sleeve disposed around the distal portion of the coupling shaft, the engagement sleeve having an internal contact surface for engagement with the first locking member.

38. (New) The coupling system of claim 37, wherein the internal contact surface of the engagement sleeve extends at an oblique angle with respect to the longitudinal axis.

39. (New) The coupling system of claim 37, further comprising a biasing member biasing the engagement sleeve towards the proximal portion of the coupling shaft.

40. (New) The coupling system of claim 39, wherein the biasing member comprises a spring.

41. (New) The coupling system of claim 39, further comprising an attachment housing disposed around the proximal portion of the coupling shaft, the attachment housing controlling the position of the engagement sleeve relative to the coupling shaft along the longitudinal axis.

42. (New) The coupling system of claim 41, wherein movement of the attachment housing proximally along the longitudinal axis relative to the coupling shaft allows the engagement sleeve to move proximally along the longitudinal axis relative to the coupling shaft and engage the first locking member urging the first locking member towards the locked position.

43. (New) The coupling system of claim 42, wherein the attachment housing is rotatable about the longitudinal axis to facilitate movement of the attachment housing along the longitudinal axis relative to the coupling shaft.

44. (New) The coupling system of claim 32, wherein the bore of the coupling shaft defines a shoulder and wherein the first locking member urges the portion of the medical dissection tool received within the bore against the internal shoulder when in the locked position.

45. (New) A coupling assembly for joining a power source to a medical dissection tool, the coupling assembly comprising:

a coupling shaft having a proximal portion, an opposing distal portion, and a longitudinal axis extending therebetween, wherein the distal portion comprises an external surface and an internal surface, the internal surface defining a bore extending along the longitudinal axis for receiving a portion of the medical dissection tool,

a first aperture extending from the external surface to the internal surface along a first axis substantially perpendicular to the longitudinal axis, the first aperture having a first length extending substantially along the longitudinal axis between a proximal wall and a distal wall, the first aperture having a first width extending substantially transverse to both the longitudinal axis and the first axis between a pair of sidewalls, wherein the first length is greater than the first

width such that the first aperture is elongated along the longitudinal axis and wherein the proximal wall, distal wall, and pair of sidewalls extend in a direction substantially parallel to the first axis;

a first locking member positioned at least partially within the first aperture and translatable along the longitudinal axis with respect to the coupling shaft from an unlocked position to a locked position to secure the medical dissection tool within the internal passage, wherein the first locking member is spaced from the proximal wall of the first aperture and adjacent to the distal wall of the first aperture in the unlocked position and wherein the first locking member is adjacent to the proximal wall of the first aperture and spaced from the distal wall of the first aperture in the locked position;

an engagement sleeve disposed around the distal portion of the coupling shaft, the engagement sleeve having an internal contact surface for engagement with the first locking member, the internal contact surface extending at an oblique angle with respect to the longitudinal axis;

a spring biasing the engagement sleeve towards the proximal portion of the coupling shaft; and

an attachment housing disposed around the proximal portion of the coupling shaft for controlling the position of the engagement sleeve relative to the coupling shaft, the attachment housing moveable along the longitudinal axis relative to the coupling shaft by rotation of the attachment housing about the longitudinal axis;

wherein the first locking member translates at an oblique angle relative to the longitudinal axis and the first axis when moved between the unlocked and locked positions.

46. (New) The coupling assembly of claim 45, wherein the oblique angle is approximately 45°.